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OLD SCROOGE:

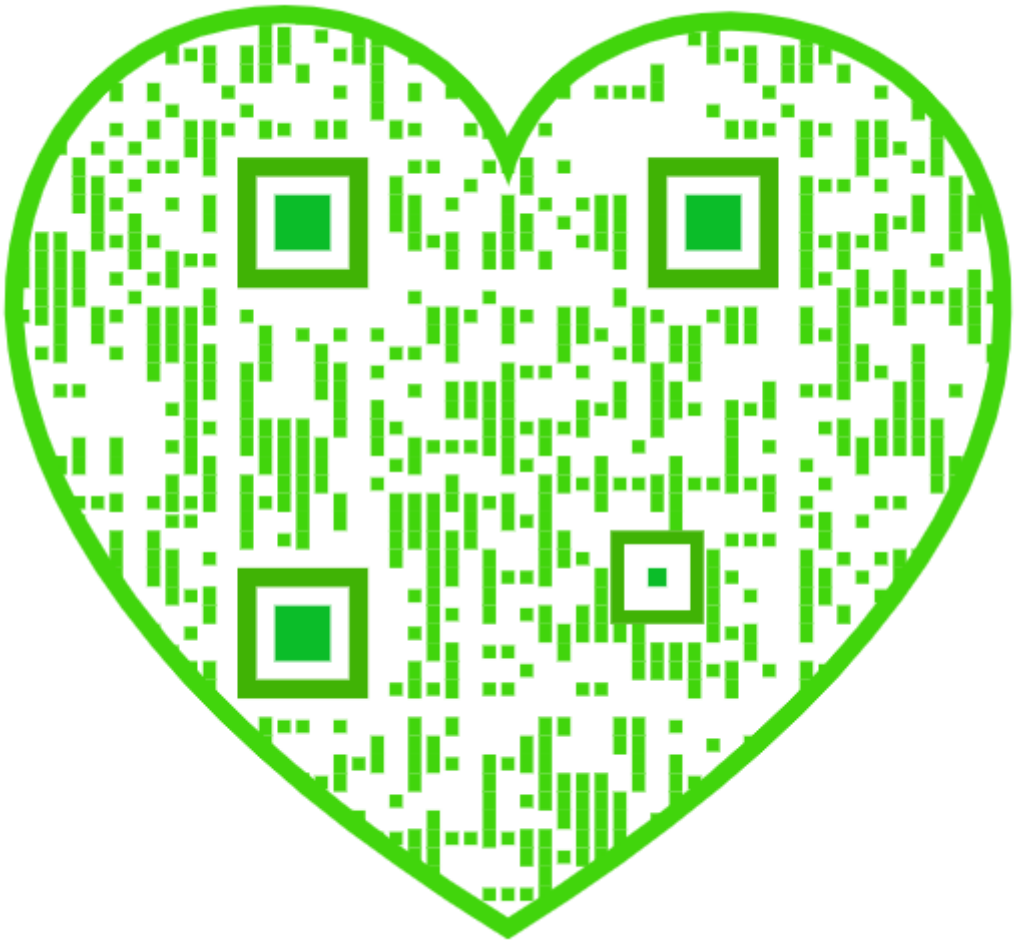
A Christmas Carol in Five Staves.

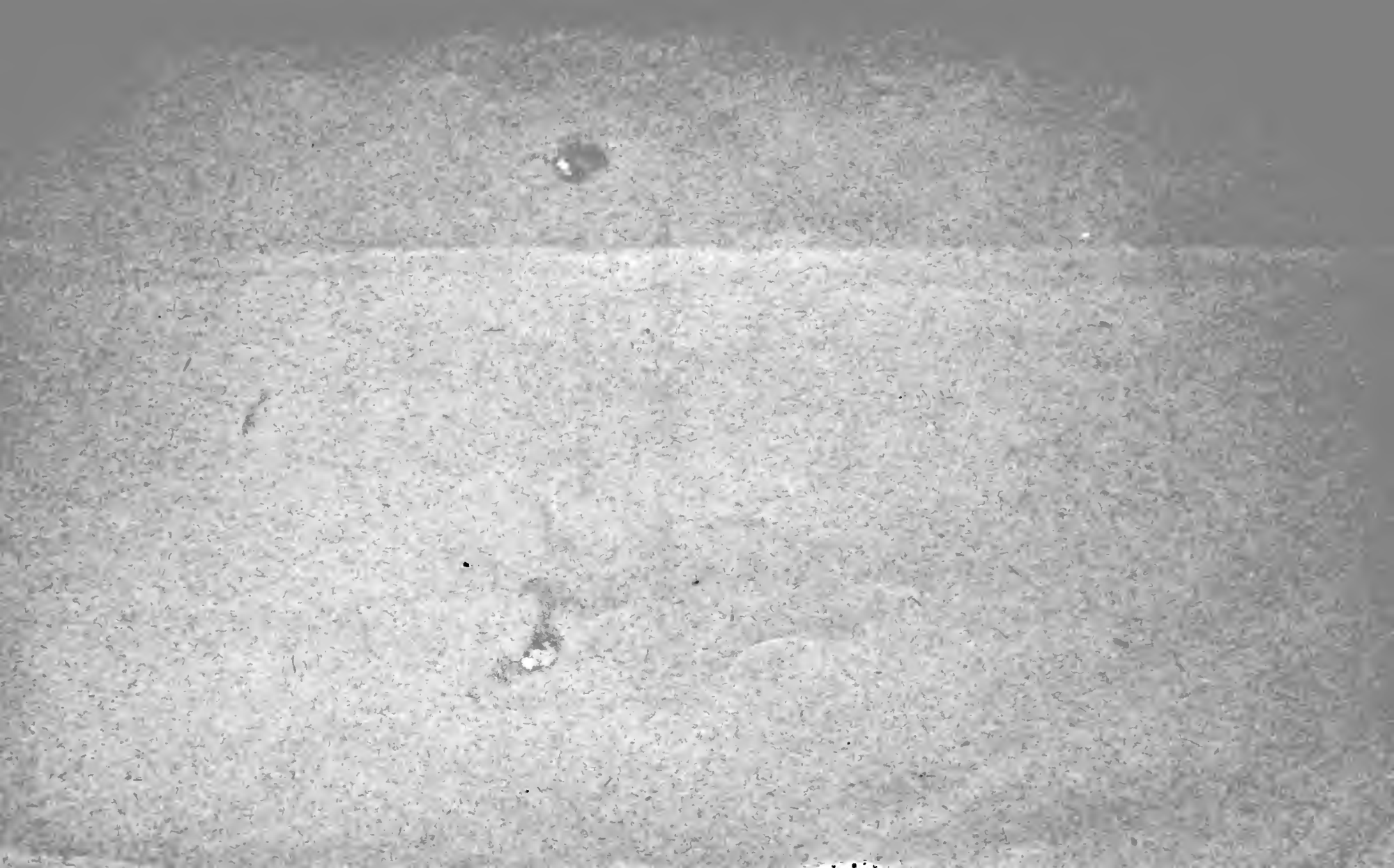
DRAMATIZED FROM

Charles Dickens' Celebrated Christmas Story,

By CHARLES A. SCOTT.

NEWARK, N. J.:
NEW JERSEY SOLDIERS' HOME PRINT.
1877.





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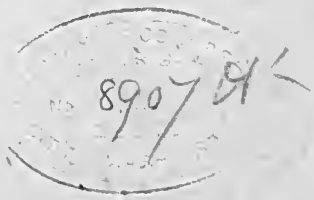

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CHARACTERS.

Ebenezer Scrooge, a miserly broker.....
Frederick Merry, a nephew to Scrooge.....
Bob Cratchit, clerk to Scrooge.....
Ghost of Jacob Marley, dead seven years .....
Spirit of Christmas Past.....
Spirit of Christmas Present.....
Mr. Thomas Topper.....
Mr. Henry Snapper.....
Mr. Mumford, Mr Barnes | philanthropic citizens.....
Peter Cratchit.....
Little Cratchit.....
Tiny Tim.....
Scrooge's former self .....
Mr. Stevens, Mr. Jones, Mr. Fatchin, Mr. Snuffer, Mr. Redface | Scrooge's business friends.....
Mr. Kemper.....
Mr. Fezziwig, Scrooges former master .....
Mr. James Badger.....
Dick Wilkins, Fezziwig's apprentice.....
Old Joe, a pawnbroker.....
Mr. Shroud, an undertaker.....
Old Baldhead, the fiddler.....
The Lamp Lighter.....
First Man.....
Second Man.....
Ignorance.....
The boy with the turkey.....

Thomas, a servant.....
Mrs. Belle Kemper, Scrooge's first and last love.....
Mrs. Frederick Merry, Miss Julia Kemper, Miss Sarah Kemper | her daughters.....
Mrs. Cratchit, a devoted wife.....
Belinda Cratchit, Martha Cratchit | her daughters.....
Mrs. Caroline Badger .....
Mrs. Mangle, a laundress.....
Mrs. Dilber, a char-woman.....
Mrs. Fezziwig, a worthy matron.....
Clara Fezziwig, Emma Fezziwig | her daughters.....
Little Fanny Scrooge.....
Want.....
Six or eight children for tableaux.

☞ By a distribution of two or three characters to one person, the peice can be performed by fifteen males and nine females.

COSTUMES.

Scrooge. First dress: Brown Quaker-cut coat, waistcoat and pants. Dark overcoat. Low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat. Black silk stock and standing collar. Bald wig with tufts of white hair on each side. Smooth face. Second dress: Dressing gown, cotton night-cap and slippers.

Fred. Merry. First dress: Walking suit, overcoat, black silk hat. Black silk stock and standing collar. Side whiskers. Second dress: Dress suit

Bob Cratchit. Long-tailed business coat of common material, much worn, and buttoned up to the neck. Woolen pants and waistcoat of check pattern. Colored scarf and standing collar. Large white comforter. Narrow-rimmed silk hat, old style and the worse for wear. Smooth face.

Ghost of Marley. Drab cut-away coat and breeches. Low-cut single-breasted vest. Ruffled shirt. White neckcloth. Drab leggings. Gray, long-haired wig. with queue. Shaggy eyebrows.

Spirit of Christmas Past. White tunic trimmed with flowers. Fleshings. Jeweled belt around waist. Long white hair hanging loose down neck and back. Jeweled star for forehead. White conical hat, very high, carried under the arm. Smooth, pale face—no wrinkles. Wand of holly.

Spirit of Christmas Present. Green robe bordered with white fur. Fleshings. Trunks. Brown hose. Dark-brown curls. Holly wreath for the head.

Mumford. Overcoat. Under suit of the period—1840. Black silk hat. White neckcloth and standing collar. Gray, long-haired wig. Smooth face. Spectacles.

Barnes. Blue cloth over and under coats. Black silk hat. Black silk stock and standing collar. Iron-gray short-haired wig. Mutton-chop whiskers. Walking stick.

Topper and Snapper. Dress suits of the period—1840.

Peter Cratchit. Jacket or short coat. Very large standing collar and neckerchief.

Little Cratchit. Calico shirt. Short trousers. Shoes and stockings. Apron.

Tiny Tim. Same as Little Cratchit, with the addition of a jacket.

Scrooge's former self. First dress ; Cutaway coat. Knee breeches. Second dress : Cape coat. Hessians.

Ignorance and Want. Clad in rags Fleshings.

Old Joe. Gabardine or long-skirted coat. Shaggy wig and beard. Old smoking cap.

Mrs. Cratchit. Plain black or brown dress. Cap and apron.

Mrs. Merry, Kemper and Misses Kemper. Handsome house dresses of the period.

Misses Fezziwig. Low-necked dresses with short sleeves.

Mrs. Badger. Plain walking dress. Bonnet and shawl.

SCENERY,

FURNITURE and PROPERTIES.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Scrooge & Marley's Counting House, 1st G. backed by an interior 2d G. Set fire-place—painted grate fire L. Window in flat L. C. Double doors in flat, thrown open, R. C. Scrooge's desk and chair near window—ruler, pens, ink and paper on desk. Bob Cratchit's Desk in inner room in sight of audience. Lighted candles on both desks. Scuttle of coal near fire place. Clothes hooks on flat for Scrooge's hat and great coat. Coal shovel for Bob to enter with. Subscription list for Mumford to enter with. ☞ Clear stage of desk, chair and scuttle.

SCENE II. Scrooge's apartments 3d or 4th G. Door L. C. and window R. C. in flat, backed by a street scene. Small grate fire and mantel L. 2. Old-fashioned clock and two plaster casts on mantel. Door R. 2. Table L. C. Lighted candle, spoon, basin and writing materials on table. Saucepan of gruel on hob. Two easy chairs near fire place. Lights down. Fender at fire. Ringing bells of place. Scrooge's hat and coat hung on the wall. Chain made of cash boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, purses, etc., for ghost to enter with. Toothpick for Scrooge to show. Trap ready for ghost to disappear.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Scrooge's bed-room 1st G. Chimney C., with painted coal fire. Door L. C, window R. C. Trap near hearth for Spirit of Christmas past to enter. Small four-post bedstead with curtains L. Bureau or washstand R.

SCENE II.—An old school room 3d G. Door L. C., and window R. C. in flat. Chair at window. A stuffed parrot on stand near R. 3. Two or three school desks, a platform and desk for the master; books for young Scrooge.

SCENE III.—A wareroom, full depth of stage. An elevated platform, centre of flat, for the fiddler. Old-fashioned arm chair at L. 2, for Mrs Fezziwig.

SCENE IV.—Plain room, 2d G. No properties.

SCENE V.—Drawing room, 5th G., trimmed with evergreens. A Christmas tree, trimmed and lighted, R. U. E. Ornaments on mantel. Fireplace L. Suit of parlor furniture. Centre table C. Toys for children—doll and doll's dress for Belle. Trap ready for spirit to disappear.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A room in Scrooge's house, 1st G. Flat painted to show game, poultry, meats, etc. Torch, shaped like a cornucopia for Spirit of Christmas Present.

SCENE II.—Bob Cratchit's home—Plain room 4th G. Door R. and L. C., backed by kitchen flat. Dresser and crockery C. of flat. Fireplace L. U. E. Saucepan of potatoes on fire; six wooden or cane-seat chairs; a high chair for Tiny Tim. Large table C.; white table-cloth; large bowl on side table R.; three tumblers and a custard cup without a handle. Nuts, apples and oranges on dressar. Small crutch for Tiny Tim to enter with. Goose on dish for Peter to enter with.

SCENE III.—A street mansion with lighted windows showing shadow of a group inside, 1st G. Snow. Torch and ladder for lamp lighter.

SCENE IV.—Drawing room 4th G. Arch 3d G. Handsome suite of furniture. Large table R. Sideboard with wine and glasses at flat C. Piano L. 2d E. Coffee-urn and cups on small table. R. 3d E. Piano-stool, music stand. Sheet music on piano. Salver for waiter.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Scrooge's bed room 2d G. as in scene 1, act 2.

SCENE II.—Street 1st G. Snuff-box for Snuffer to enter with.

SCENE III.—Pawn shop 3d G. Doors R. and L. C. in flat-Table C., four common chairs; a smoky oil lamp—lighted, and a piece of white chalk on table. Bundle of bed curtains—same as on Scrooge's bedstead—blankets and shirts for Mrs. Mangle to enter with. Bundle of under-clothing, towels, sheets, sugar-tongs, tea-spoons and old boots for Mrs. Dilber to enter with. A package containing a seal, pencil-case, pair of sleeve-buttons and scarf pin, for Shroud to enter with. Purse of coins for Old Joe.

SCENE IV.—Street—exterior of Scrooge and Marley's 1st G. Windew L. C. No properties.

SCENE V.—Bob Cratchet's home—same as scene 2, act, 3. Table C., candles and work-basket on table. Book for Peter on table; calico or muslin for Mrs. Cratchit and Belinda to sew.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Scrooge's apartment, as in scene 2d act 1st. No additional properties.

SCENE II.—Street—exterior of Scrooge's house 1st G. Brass knocker on the door. Turkey for boy to enter with.

SCENE III.—Drawing room same as scene 4, act 3. Handkerchief for Fred to blindfold.

OLD SCROOGE.

STAVE ONE.

SCENE I.—*Christmas Eve. Counting house of Scrooge & Marley. Set fireplace with small grate fire* L. *Centre door in flat. thrown open, showing a small inner chamber and desk, at which Bob Cratchit is discovered seated, endeavoring to warm his hands over the candle. Small desk,* L. C., *at which Scrooge is discovered busy at figures.*

Enter Bob Cratchit, from inner room, with coal shovel, going toward fireplace.

Scrooge. And six makes twenty-eight pounds, four shill——What do you want in here?

Bob. My fire is nearly out, sir, and I thought I would take one or two lumps of coal, and—

Scro. You think more of your personal comforts than you do of your business and my interest.

Bob. The room, sir, is very cold, and I—

Scro. Work sir, work! and I'll warrant that you'll keep warm. If you persist in this wanton waste of coals, you and I will have to part. (*Bob retires to his desk, puts on his white comforter, and again tries to warm his hands. Scrooge resuming*). Four shillings and ninepence—

Enter Fred'k Merry, C. D., *saluting Bob as he passes him.*

Fred. A Merry Christmas, uncle. God save you.

Scro. Bah; humbug.

Fred. Christmas a humbug, uncle! You don't mean that, I'm sure?

Scro. I do. Merry Christmas! What right have you to be merry? What reason have you to be merry? You're poor enough.

Fred. Come then. What right have you to be dismal? What reason have you to be morose? You're rich enough.

Scro. Bah; humbug.

Fred. Don't be cross, uncle.

Scro. What else can I be when I live in such a world of fools as this? Merry Christmas! Out upon Merry Christmas! What's Christmas-time to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, but not an hour richer; a time for balancing your books and having every item in 'em through a round dozen of months presented dead against you? If I could work my will, every idiot who goes about with "Merry Christmas" on his lips should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. He should.

Fred. Uncle!

Scro. (*sternly*). Nephew, keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine.

Fred. Keep it! But you don't keep it.

Scro. Let me leave it alone, then. Much good may it do you. Much good it has ever done you.

Fred. There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say, Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas-time, when it came round—apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging to it can be apart from that—as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time; the only time I know of, in the long calender of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. And, therefore, uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it *has* done me good, and *will* do me good; and I say, God bless it. (*Cratchit applauds, but observing Scrooge, endeavors to be intent on something else.*)

Scro. (*to Bob*). Let me hear another sound from *you*, and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your situation! (*To Fred*). You're quite a powerful speaker, sir, I wonder you don't go into Parliament.

Fred. Don't be angry, uncle. Come, dine with us to-morrow?

Scro. I'd see you in blazes first.

Fred. But why? Why?

Scro. Why did you get married?

Fred. Because I fell in love.

Scro. Because you fell in love! The only one thing in the world more ridiculous than a merry Christmas. Good afternoon.

Fred. Nay, uncle, but you never came to see me before that happened. Why give it as a reason for not coming now?

Scro. Good afternoon.

Fred. I want nothing from you; I ask nothing of you; why cannot we be friends?

Scro. Good afternoon!

Fred. I am sorry, with all my heart, to find you so resolute. We have never had any quarrel, to which I have been a party. But I have made the trial in homage to Christmas, and I'll keep my Christmas humor to the last. So a Merry Christmas, uncle.

Scro Good afternoon!

(*As Fred goes out he exchanges greetings with Bob.*)

Fred. A merry Christmas.

Bob. The same to you, and many of them.

Scro. There's another fellow, my clerk, with fifteen shillings a week, and a wife and family, talking about a Merry Christmas. I'll retire to the lunatic asylum.

Enter Mr. Mumford and Mr. Barnes with subscription book and paper, ushered in by Bob.

Mr. Mumford. Scrooge & Marley's, I believe (*referring to paper*). Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge, or Mr. Marley?

Scro. Mr Marley has been dead these seven years. He died seven years ago this very night.

Mr. M. We have no doubt his liberality is well represented by his surviving partner. (*Presents list.*

Scrooge frowns, shakes his head, and returns it.) At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge, it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the poor and destitute, who suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousands are in want of common necessaries; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts, sir.

Scro. Are there no prisons?

Mr. M. Plenty of prisons.

Scro. And the union work-houses—are they still in operation?

Mr. M. They are. I wish I could say they were not.

Scro. The tread-mill and the poor law are in full vigor, then?

Mr. M. Both very busy, sir.

Sch. Oh! I was afraid from what you said at first that something had occurred to stop them in their useful course. I'm very glad to hear it.

Mr. M. Under the impression that they scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body to the multitude, a few of us are endeavoring to raise a fund to buy the poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth. We chose this time because it is a time, of all others, when want is keenly felt, and abundance rejoices. What shall I put you down for.

Scro. Nothing.

Mr. M. You wish to be anonymous?

Scro. I wish to be left alone. Since you ask me what I wish, gentlemen, that is my answer. I don't make merry myself at Christmas, and I can't afford to make idle people merry. I help to support the establishments I have mentioned; they cost enough, and those who are badly off must go there.

Mr. B. Many can't go there; and many would rather die.

Scro. If they had rather die, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population. Besides, excuse me, I don't know that.

Mr. B. But you might know it.

Scro. It's not my business. It's enough for a man to understand his own business, and not interfere with other people's. Mine occupies me constantly. Good afternoon, gentlemen.

Mr. M. It is useless, we may as well withdraw. [*Exeunt. As they go out Bob is seen to hand them money.*]

(*Voice at door* R. *singing.*)

God bless you, merry gentlemen,
May nothing you dismay—

Scro. (*Seizes ruler and makes a dash at the door.*) Begone! I'll have none of your carols here. (*Makes sign to Bob, who extinguishes his candle and puts on his hat and enters.*) You'll want all day to morrow, I suppose?

Bob. If quite convenient, sir.

Scro. It's not convenient, and its not fair. If I was to stop half-a-crown for it you'd think yourself ill-used, I'll be bound? (*Bob smiles faintly.*) And yet you don't think *me* ill-used when I pay a day's wages for no work.

Bob. It's only once a year, sir.

Scro. A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December. (*Buttoning up his great coat to the chin.*) But I suppose you must have the whole day. Be here all the earlier next morning. (*Exit* C.)

Bob. I will, sir. You old skinflint. If I had my way, I'd give you Christmas. I'd give it to you this way (*Dumb show of pummelling Scrooge.*) Now for a slide on Cornhill, at the end of a lane of boys, twenty times, in honor of Christmas Eve, and then for Camden Town as hard as I can pelt. (*Exit* C., *with sliding motions, closing doors after him.*)

SCENE II.—*Scrooge's apartments. Grate fire,* L. 2, *Window,* R. C. *Door,* L. C. *in flat. Table,* L. 4. *Spoon and basin on table. Saucepan on hob. Two easy chairs near fire. Lights down.*

[*Scrooge in dressing gown and night-cap, discovered, with candle, searching the room.*]

Scro. Pooh! pooh! Marley's dead seven years to night. Impossible. Nobody under the table, nobody under the couch, nobody in the closet, nobody nowhere (*Yawns*). Bah, humbug! (*Locks door* R. *and seats himself in easy chair; dips gruel from saucepan into basin, and takes two or three spoonsful. Yawns and composes himself for rest.*)

[*One or two stanzas of a Christmas carol may be sung outside, at the close of which a general ringing of bells ensues, succeeded by a clanking noise of chain.*]

Enter Jacob Marley's ghost, R., *with chain made of cash-boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, purposes, etc. Hair twisted upright on each side to represent horns. White bandage around jaws.*

Scro. It's humbug still! I won't believe it. [*Pause, during which Ghost approaches the opposite side of the mantel.*] How now. What do you want with me?

Ghost. Much.

Scro. Who are you?

Gho. Ask me who I *was.*

Scro. Who *were* you then? You're particular, for a shade.

Gho. In life I was your partner, Jacob Marley.

Scro. Can you—can you sit down?

Gho. I can.

Scro. Do it, then.

Gho. You don't believe in me?

Scro. I don't.

Gho. What evidence do you require of my reality beyond that of your senses?

Scro. I don't know.

Gho. Why do you doubt your senses?

Scro. Because a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheats. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an under-done potato. There's more of gravy than of grave about you, whatever you are. You see this tooth-pick?

Gho. I do.

Scro. You are not looking at it.

Gho. But I see it, notwithstanding.

Scro. Well! I have but to swallow this, and be for the rest of my days persecuted by a legion of gobblins, all of my own creation. Humbug, I tell you; humbug. (*Ghost rattles chain, takes bandage off jaws, and drops lower jaw as far as possible.*)

Scro (*Betrays signs of fright.*) Mercy! dreadful apparition, why do you trouble me?

Gho. Man of the worldly mind, do you believe in me, or not?

Scro. I do. I must. But why do spirits walk the earth, and why do they come to me?

Gho. It is required of every man that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellow men and travel far and wide, and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world—oh, woe is me—and witness what it can not share, but might have shared on earth, turned to happiness. [*Shakes chain and wrings* his hands.]

Scro. You are fettered; tell me why?

Gho. I wear the chain I forged in life; I make it link by link and yard by yard. I girded it on of my own free will, and of my own free will I wore it. Is its pattern strange to *you*? Or would you know the weight and length of the strong coil you bear yourself. It was full as heavy and as long as this seven Christmas-eves ago. You have labored on it since. It is a ponderous chain!

Scro. Jacob, old Jacob Marley, tell me more. Speak comfort to me, Jacob.

Gho. I have none to give. It comes from other regions, Ebenezer Scrooge, and is conveyed by other ministers to other kinds of men. Nor can I tell you what I would. A very little more is all that is permitted to me. I can not rest, I can not stay, I can not linger anywhere. My spirit never walked beyond our counting house, mark me!—in life my spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our money changing hole; and weary journeys lie before me.

Scro. You must have been very slow about it, Jacob.

Gho. Slow?

Scro. Seven years dead. And traveling all the time.

Gho. The old time. No rest, no peace. Incessant tortures of remorse.

Scro. You travel fast?

Gho. On the wings of the wind.

Scro. You might have got over a great quantity of ground in seven years, Jacob.

Gho. (*Clinking his chain.*) Oh! captive, bound and double-ironed, not to know that ages of incessant labor by immortal creatures; for this earth must pass into eternity before the good of which it is susceptible is all developed. Not to know that any Christian spirit working kindly in its little sphere, whatever it may be, will find

its mortal life too short for its vast means of usefulness. Not to know that no space of regret can make amends for one life's opportunity misused. Yet, such was I. Oh, such was I!

Scro. But you were always a good man of business, Jacob.

Gho. Business! [*wringing his hands and shaking chain.*] Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business. Charity, mercy, forbearance and benevolence were all my business. The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business. [*Holds up chain at arm's length and drops it.*] At this time of the rolling year I suffer most. Why did I walk through crowds of fellow beings with my eyes turned down, and never raise them to that blessed Star which led the wise men to a poor abode. Were there no poor houses to which its light would have conducted *me?* Hear me! my time is nearly gone.

Scro. I will; but don't be hard upon me. Don't be flowery, Jacob, pray.

Gho. How it is that I appear before you in a shape that you can see, I may not tell. I have sat invisable beside you many and many a day. That is no light part of my penance. I am here to-night to warn you that you have yet a chance and hope of escaping my fate. A chance and hope of my procuring. Ebénezer.

Scro. You were always a good friend to me. Thank 'er.

Gho. You will be haunted by three spirits.

Scro. Is that the chance and hope you mentioned, Jacob?

Gho. It is.

Scro. I—I think I'd rather not.

Gho. Without their visits you can not hope to shun the path I tread. Expect the first to-morrow, when the bell tolls one.

Scro. Couldn't I take'em all at once, and have it over, Jacob?

Gho. Expect the second on the next night at the same hour. The third on the night following, when the last stroke of twelve has ceased to vibrate. Look to see me no more; and look that, for your own sake, you remember what has passed between us. [*Ghost replaces bandage around jaws, rises, winds chain about his arm,*

walks backward to window, beckoning Scrooge, who rises and follows. As soon as Ghost walks through window, which opens for him, he motions for Scrooge to stop, and disappears through trap. Window closes as before.

CURTAIN.

STAVE TWO.

SCENE I.—*Scrooge's bed room. A small, four-post bedstead with curtains at* L. E., *bureau* R. E. *Bell tolls twelve. Scrooge pulls curtains aside and sits on side of bed. Touches spring of his repeater, which also strikes twelve.*

Scro. Why, it isn't possible that I can have slept through a whole day, and far into another night. It isn't possible that anything has happened to the sun, and this is twelve o'clock at noon.

(*The Spirit of Christmas Past rises from the hearth as Scrooge finishes his Speech.*)

Scro. Are you the Spirit, sir, whose coming was foretold to me?

Spirit. I am.

Scro. Who, and what are you?

Spir. I am the ghost of Christmas Past.

Scro. Long past?

Spir. No; your past.

Scro. I beg you will be covered.

Spir. What! would you so soon put out, with worldly hands, the light I give? Is it not enough that you are one of those whose passions made this cap, and force me through whole trains of years to wear it low upon my brow?

Scro. I have no intention of offending you. May I make bold to enquire what business has brought you here?

Spir. Your welfare.

Scro. I am much obliged, but I think a night of unbroken rest would be more conducive to that end.

Spir. Your reclamation, then. Take heed! observe

the shadows of the past, and profit by the recollection of them.

Scro. What would you have me do?

Spir. Remain where you are, while memory recalls the past.

SCENE II.—*The spirit waves a wand, the scene opens and displays a dilapidated school-room. Young Scrooge discovered seated at a window, reading.*

Scro. (*Trembling*) Good heavens! I was a boy! It's the old school; and it's the Christmas I was left alone.

Spir. You remember it?

Scro. Yes, yes; I know! I was reading all about Ali Baba. Dear old honest Ali Baba. And Valentine and his wild brother, Orson; and the Sultan's groom turned upside down by the Geni. Served him right, I'm glad of it; what business had *he* to be married to the Princess! [*In an earnest and excited manner, and voice between laughing and crying.*] There's the parrot: green body and yellow tail, with a thing like a lettuce growing out of the top of his head; there he is! Poor Robin Crusoe, where have you been, Robin Crusoe? There goes Friday, running for his life to the little Creek. Halloo! Hoop! Halloo! [*Changing to a pitiful tone, in allusion to his former self.*] Poor boy.

Spir. Strange to have forgotten this for so many years.

Scro. (*Putting his hand in his pocket and drying his eyes on his cuff*) I wish—but it's too late now.

Spir. What is the matter?

Scro. Nothing; nothing. There was a boy singing a Christmas carol at my door, last night, I should like to have given him something, that's all

[*Young Scrooge rises and walks up and down. Door opens and Fanny Scrooge darts in and puts her arms about his neck and kisses him.*]

Fanny. Dear, dear brother! I have come to bring you home, dear brother. (*Clapping her hands and laughing gleefully.*) To bring you home, home, home!

Young S. Home, little Fan?

Fan. Yes! Home for good, and all. Home for ever

and ever. Father is so much kinder than he use to be, that home is like Heaven. He spoke so gently to me one dear night when I was going to bed, that I was not afraid to ask him once more if you might come home; and he said yes, you should; and sent me in a coach to bring you. And you're to be a man, and never to come back here; but first we're to be together all the Christmas long, and have the merriest time in all the world.

Young S. You're quite a woman, little Fan! [*She claps her hands and laughs, tries to touch his head, but being too little, laughs again. Stands on tip-toe to embrace him, and in childish eagerness and glee, drags him willingly towards the door. Exeunt.*]

Voice [*outside*]. Bring down Master Scrooge's box, there.

[*Scene Closes.*]

Spir. Always a delicate creature, whom a breath might have withered. But she had a large heart.

Scro. So she had. You're right. I will not gainsay it, Spirit. Lord forbid.

Spir. She died a woman, and had, as I think, children.

Scro. One child.

Spir. True; your nephew.

Scro. [*uneasily*] Yes.

Spir. Let us see another Christmas. (*Waves wand.*)

SCENE III.—*Fezziwig's Ball, full depth of stage, representing a wareroom. Fezziwig and Mrs. Fezziwig* L., *the former standing and clapping his hands, and the latter seated in an arm-chair, manifesting delight. Old bald-headed fiddler, on an elevated seat, at the back. Dick Wilkins, with two Miss Fezziwigs, forward to right and back. Scrooge's former self advances and retires to the partners, with fancy steps: hands around; right and left; ladies change; balance; promenade Other characters to fill up the picture. Laughter and merriment to follow Scrooge's speech.*

Spir. Do you know it?

Gho. Know it! I was apprenticed here. Why, its old Fezziwig. Bless his heart; its Fezziwig alive again,

and Mrs. Fezziwig, too. Dick Wilkins, to be sure, with Fezziwig's two daughters. Bless me, yes. There he is. He was very much attached to me, was Dick. Poor Dick. And see me, cutting the pigeon-wing. Dear, dear, dear!

(*Dance comes to an end amid general hilarity and merriment, and the scene closes in.*)

Spir. A small matter to make these silly folks so full of gratitude.

Scro. Small! Why, old Fezziwig was one of the best men that ever lived. He never missed giving his employees a Christmas ball.

Spir. Why, is it not! He spent but a few pounds of money—three or four pounds, perhaps—. Is that so much that he deserves your praise?

Scro. It isn't that, Spirit. He had the power to render us happy or unhappy; to make our services light or burdensome; a pleasure or a toil. Say that his power lives in words and looks; in things so light and unsignificant that it is impossible to add and count 'em up; what then? The happiness he gives is quite as great as if it cost a fortune—oh, dear.

Spir. What is the matter?

Scro. Nothing, particular.

Spir. Something, I think.

Scro. No, no. I should like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk, just now, that's all.

Spir My time grows short, let us hurry on. Do you remember this? (*Waves wand.*)

SCENE IV.—*A room. Enter Belle and Scrooge's former self, at twenty-five years of age.*

Scro. It is Belle, as sure as I am a living sinner.

Belle. It matters little to you. To you very little. Another idol has displaced me; and if it can cheer and comfort you in time to come, as I would have tried to do, I have no just cause to grieve.

Young S. What idol has displaced you?

Belle. A golden one.

Young S. This is the even-handed dealing of the world. There is nothing on which it is so hard as poverty; and there is nothing it professes to condemn with such severity, as the pursuit of wealth.

Belle. You fear the world to much. All your other

hopes have merged into the hope of being beyond the chance of its sordid reproach. I have seen your nobler aspirations fall off one by one, until the master passion *gain*, engrosses you. Have I not?

Young S. What then? Even if I have grown so much wiser, what then? I am not changed toward you, (*She shakes her head.*) Am I?

Belle. Our contract is an old one. It was made when we were both poor and content to be so, until in good season, we could improve our worldly fortune by our patient industry. You *are* changed. When it was made you were another man.

Young S. I was a boy.

Belle. Your own feeling tells you that you were not what you are. I am. That which promised happiness when we were one in heart is fraught with misery now that we are two. How often and how keenly I have thought of this, I will not say. It is enough that I *have* thought of it, and I can release you.

Young S. Have I ever sought release?

Belle. In words: no, never.

Young S. In what, then?

Belle. In a changed nature; in an altered spirit; in another atmosphere of life: another hope as to its great end. In everything that made my love of any worth or value in your sight. If this had never been between us, tell me, would you seek me out and try to win me now? Ah, no!

Young S. You think not?

Belle. I would gladly think otherwise, if I could; Heaven knows. When I have learned a truth like this, I know how strong and irresistible it must be. But if you were free to-day, to-morrow, yesterday, can even I believe that you would choose a dowerless girl—you, who, in your very confidence with her, weigh everything by gain; or chosing her, if for a moment you were false enough to your one guiding principle to do so, do I not know that your repentance and regret would surely follow? I do; and I release you, with a full heart, for the love of him you once were. (*He is about to speak, but with her head turned from him she resumes.*) You may—the memory of what is past half makes me hope you will—have pain in this. A very, very brief time, and you will dismiss the recollection of it, gladly, as an unprofitable

dream, from which it happened well that you awoke. May you be happy in the life you have chosen. Fare well. [*Exit.*]

Young S. (*Following*) Belle, Belle! Hear me. Let me explain. [*Exit.*]

[*Scene Closes.*]

Scro. Spirit, show me no more! Conduct me home. Why do you delight to torture me?

Spir. Oh, mortal, what a treasure didst thou cast away. She, whom you resigned for paltry gold, became the happy wife of your former schoolmate, Kemper. One shadow more. Behold now the tender mother of smiling children, in their joyous home—a home that might have been your own.

Scro. No more! no more! I don't wish to see it.

Spir. Behold. (*Waves Wand.*)

SCENE V.—*Drawing room. Six or eight children, of various sizes, in groups, playing with toys. A Christmas tree, trimmed and lighted. Mr. and Mrs. Kemper seated at table; their daughter Belle seated at fire, dressing a doll for one of the girls.*

Mr. K. Belle, I saw an old friend of yours this afternoon.

Mrs. K. Who was it?

Mr. K. Guess?

Mrs. K. How can I? Tut, don't I know (*laughingly*), Mr. Scrooge?

Mr. K. Mr. Scrooge it was—your old sweetheart (*laughing*). I passed his office window, and as it was not shut up, and he had a candle inside, I could scarcely help seeing him. His partner, old Jacob Marley, lies upon the point of death, I hear. And there he sat, alone. Quite alone in the world, I do believe.

Mrs. K. Poor old man.

[*Scene Closes.*]

Scro, Spirit (*in a broken voice*), remove me from this place.

Spir. I told you these were shadows of the things that

have been. That they are what they are, do not blame me.

Scro. I am to blame for what they are, and now that I see what they might have been, I am more wretched than ever. Remove me! I can not bear it. (*Turns upon the spirit, and struggles with it.*) Leave me! Take me back! Haunt me no longer! (*Seizes the extinguisher-cap, presses it down, while spirit sinks through trap, and disappears. When trap is replaced, Scrooge reels to the bedstead, apparently exhausted, and with the cap grasped in his hand, falls asleep.*)

CURTAIN.

STAVE THREE.

SCENE I.—*Adjoining room in Scrooge's house. Flat to represent piles of turkeys, geese, game, poultry, joints of meat, sucking-pigs, strings of sausages, oysters, mince pies, plum-puddings, pears, apples, oranges, cakes and bowls of punch; also holly, mistleto and ivy.*

The Spirit of Christmas Present R. [*a giant*], *discovered holding a glowing torch—shaped like a cornucopia, to shed its light on Scrooge's entrance.*

Spir. Come in!

Enter Scrooge, timidly, L.

Spir. Come in, and know me better, man. You have never seen the like of me before.

Scro. Never.

Spir. Have never walked forth with the younger members of my family, meaning—for I am very young—my elder brothers, born in these later years?

Scro. I don't think I have. I am afraid I have not. Have you had many brothers, Spirit?

Spir. More than eighteen hundred.

Scro. A tremendous family to provide for. Spirit, conduct me where you will. I went forth last night on compulsion, and I learned a lesson which is working now.

To-night, if you have aught to teach me, let me profit by it.

Spir. Touch my robe, and remember that we are invisible, and unable to manifest our presence to those with whom we come in contact. Loose not your hold, lest you should lose yourself. [*Exeunt* L.]

SCENE II.—*Bob Cratchit's home. Mrs. Cratchit discovered laying cloth, Belinda assisting her. Master Peter Cratchit blowing the fire.*

Mrs. C. What has ever got your precious father, then? And your brother, Tiny Tim! And Martha warn't as late last Christmas Day by half an hour?

Enter Little Cratchit and Martha. Door in flat.

Little C. Here's Martha, mother! Here's Martha Hurrah! Oh, Martha, there's such a big goose at the bakers, next door. I smelt it cooking,

Mrs. C. Why, bless your heart alive, my dear, how late you are! (*Kissing her and taking off her bonnet and shawl.*)

Martha. We'd a deal of work to finish up last night, and had to clear away this morning, mother.

Mrs. C. Well, never mind, so long as you are come. Sit ye down before the fire, my dear, and have a warm, Lord bless ye.

Little C. No, no! There's father coming. Hide, Martha, hide. (*Martha gets behind the door.*)

Enter Bob Cratchit with Tiny Tim on his shoulder and little crutch in his hand. Spirit and Scrooge following, coming down front, and observing with interest all that passes.

Bob. Why, where's our Martha? (*Looking around and putting Tiny Tim down.*)

Little C. Come, Tiny Tim, and see the pudding boil. [*Exeunt children.*]

Mrs. C. Not coming.

Bob. Not coming! not coming, on Christmas Day?

Mar. (*Running into his arms.*) Dear father! I could not see you disappointed, if it were only in joke.

Bob. (*Embraces her.*) You're a good girl, Martha,

and a great comfort to us all. (*Commences to mix a bowl of punch.*)

Mrs. C. And how did little Tim behave?

Bob. As good as gold, and better. Somehow he gets thoughtful, sitting by himself so much, and thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him in church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk and blind men see. Tiny Tim is growing strong and hearty.

Enter Little Cratchit and Peter Cratchit with the goose, followed by Tiny Tim.

Little C. Hurrrh! Hurrah! Here's Peter with the big goose.

Tiny Tim. Hurrah!

(*Children place chairs around the table; Bob puts Tiny Tim in a high chair beside him, and Peter on his left, facing front, Belinda and Little Cratchit opposite. Mrs. C. and Martha at the end of the table. Bob carves and serves the goose, Mrs. C. the gravy and mashed potatoes, and Martha the apple-sauce.*)

Little C. Oh! oh! Look at the stuffing.

Tiny T. Hurrah!

Bob. I don't believe there ever was such a goose as this cooked. It's more tender than a woman's love, and only cost two and sixpence. A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us.

All. God bless us.

Tiny T. God bless us every one.

Scro. Spirit, tell me if Tiny Tim will live?

Spir. I see a vacant seat in the poor chimney-corner and a crutch without an owner carefully preserved. If these shadows remain unaltered by the future, none other of my race will find him here. What then? If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population.

Scro. (*Hangs his head.*) My very words.

Spir. Man—if man you be in heart, not adamant—forbear that wicked cant until you have discovered what the surplus is, and where it is. Will you decide what

men shall live, what men shall die. It may be, in the sight of Heaven, you are more worthless and less fit to live than millions like this poor man's child. Oh, Heaven! to hear the insect on the leaf pronouncing on the too much life among his hungry brothers of the dust!

Mrs. C. Now, Martha and Belinda, change the plates, while I bring the nuts, apples and oranges.

Bob. (*Rising and placing the punch-bowl on the table*) Here is what will remind us it is Christmas. (*Fills three tumblers and custard-cup without a handle, and passes them to Mrs. C., Peter and Martha.*) I'll give you Mr. Scrooge, the founder of the feast.

Mrs. C. The founder of the feast, indeed! I wish I had him here, I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and I hope he'd have a good appetite for it.

Bob. My dear, the children! Christmas Day.

Mrs. C. It should be Christmas Day, I am sure, on which one drinks the health of such an odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge. You know he is, Robert. Nobody knows it better than you, poor fellow.

Bob. My dear, Christmas Day.

Mrs. C. I'll drink his health for your sake and the day's, not for his. Long life to him. A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! He'll be very merry and very happy, I have no doubt.

All. A Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year.

Scro. Spirit, take me away. I see the very mention of my name casts a gloom on what, were it not for me, would be a very happy party.

Spir. Wait; they will soon put the memory of you aside, and will be ten times merrier than before, and Tiny Tim will sing.

Scro. No, no; take me hence.

(*As they retire toward the door, the spirit shakes his torch toward the party, which restores good humor.*)

Little C. Oh! we forgot the pudding!

All. The pudding! the pudding! (*Laughter and confusion.*)

SCENE III. — *A street. Mansion with lighted window, showing shadow of a group. Sounds of music inside.*

Enter Spirit and Scrooge L. *A lamp-lighter with torch and ladder* R; *as he passes them, the spirit waves his torch, and the lamp-lighter exits singing a carol. Enter two men, quarreling.*

First Man. But, I know better, it is not so.

Second Man. It is so, and I will not submit to contradiction.

(*Spirit waves his torch over them.*)

First Man. Well, I declare, here we are, old friends, quarreling on Christmas Day. It is a shame to quarrel on Christmas Day.

Second Man. So it is a shame to quarrel on this day. God love it, so it is; come, and if we are not merry for the rest of it, it shall not be my fault. [*Exeunt.*]

Scro. Spirit, is there a peculiar flavor in what you sprinkle from your torch?

Spir. There is. My own.

Scro. I notice that you sprinkle it to restore good humor, and over dinners. Would it apply to any kind of dinner on this day?

Spir. To any kindly given. To a poor one most.

Scro. Why to a poor one most?

Spir. Because it needs it most.

Enter Ignorance and Want; approaching the Spirit, they kneel at his feet. Scrooge starts back appalled.

Spir. Look here! oh, man, look here! Look! look down here. Behold, where graceful youth should have filled their features out and touched them with its freshest tints; a stale and shriveled hand, like that of age, has pinched and twisted them and pulled them into shreds. Where angels might have sat enthroned, devils lurk and glare out, menacing. No change, no degradation, no perversion of humanity, in any grade, through all the mysteries of wonderful creation, has monsters half so horrible and dread.

Scro. They are fine-looking children. Spirit, are they yours?

Spir. They are man's. And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance, this girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree; but most of all, beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is *doom*, unless the writing be erased.

Deny it, great city. Slander those who tell it ye. Admit it for your factious purposes, make it worse, and abide the end.

Scro. Have they no refuge or resource?

Spir. Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?

Scro. My very words, again.

Scro. Begone! hideous, wretched creatures, your habitation should not be in a Christian land. (*Ignorance and Want slouch off.*) Let us proceed, time is passing, and my life is hastening to an end.

Scro. Are spirit's lives so short?

Spir. My life on this globe is very brief. It ends to-night.

Scro. To-night?

Spir. To-night, at midnight. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE IV.—*Drawing room. Mr. and Mrs. Fred Merry, Miss Julia Kemper, Miss Sarah Kemper, Mr. Thomas Topper, Mr. Henry Snapper, discovered seated around the desert table. Servant serving coffee.*

All. (*Laughing*) Ha, ha! ha, ha, ha, ha!

Enter Spirit and Scrooge, L.

Fred. He said Christmas was a humbug, as I live.

All. Ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Fred. He believed it, too.

Mrs. M. More shame for him, Fred!

Fred. He's a comical old fellow, that's the truth; and not so pleasant as he might be; however, his offenses carry their own punishment, and I have nothing to say against him.

Mrs M. I'm sure he's very rich, Fred. At least you always tell *me* so.

Fred. What of that, my dear. His wealth is of no use to him. He don't do any good with it. He don't make himself comfortable with it. He hasn't the satisfaction of thinking—ha, ha, ha, ha!—that he is ever going to benefit us with it.

Mrs. M. I have no patience with him.

Julia. Neither have I for such a stingy old wretch!

Fred. Oh, I have. I am sorry for him; I couldn't be angry with him if I tried. Who suffers by his ill whims? Himself, always. Here he takes it into his head to dislike us, and he won't come and dine with us. What's the consequence? He don't lose much of a dinner.

Mrs. M. Indeed, I think he loses a very good dinner.

Sarah. A much better one than he could have served up in his old dingy chambers.

Fred. Well, I'm very glad to hear it, because I haven't great faith in these young housekeepers. What do *you* say, Topper?

Topper. A bachelor like myself is a wretched outcast, and has no right to express an opinion on such an important subject.

Mrs. M. Do go on, Fred. He never finishes what he begins to say. He is such a ridiculous fellow.

Fred. I was only going to say, that the consequence of our uncle taking a dislike to us, and not making merry with us, *is*, as I think, that he loses some pleasant moments, which could do him no harm. I am sure he loses pleasanter companions than he finds in his own thoughts, either in his moldy old office or his dusty chambers. I mean to give him the same chance every year, whether he likes it or not, for I pity him. He may rail at Christmas till he dies, but he can't help thinking better of it—I defy him—if he finds me going there, in good temper, year after year, and saying, Uncle Scrooge, I wish you A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year! If it only puts him in the vain to leave his poor clerk fifty pounds, *that's* something; and I think I shook him yesterday.—Come, let us have some music. Here, Thomas, clear away.

[*All rise and go to the piano. Waiter clears table during the singing of a Christmas carol or any selected piece.*]

Fred. We must not devote the whole evening to music. Suppose we have a game?

All. Agreed.

Spir. Time flies; I have grown old. We must hasten on.

Scro. No, no! One half hour, Spirit, only one.

Fred. I have a new game to propose.

Sarah. What is it?

Fred. It is a game called Yes and No. I am to think

of something and you are all to guess what it is. I am thinking of an animal, a live animal, rather a disagreeable animal, a savage animal that growls and grunts sometimes, and talks sometimes, and lives in London, and walks about the streets, and is not made a show of, and is not led by anybody and don't live in a menagerie, and is not a horse, a cow or a donkey or a bull. There, now guess?

Mrs. M. Is it a pig?

Fred. No.

Julia. Is it a tiger?

Fred. No.

Topper. Is it a dog?

Fred. No.

Sarah. Is it a cat?

Snapper. It's a monkey.

Fred. No.

Mrs. M. Is it a bear?

Fred. No.

Julia. I have found it out! I know what it is, Fred! I know what it is!

Fred. What is it?

Julia. Its your uncle Scro-o-o-ooge!

Fred. Yes.

All. Ha, ha, ha! ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. M. It is hardly fair, you ought to have said yes, when I said, it's a bear.

Fred. He has given us plenty of merriment, I'm sure, and it would be ungrateful not to drink his health. Here is some mulled wine ready to our hand at the moment; and when you are ready I say uncle Scrooge! (*Servant brings wine forward.*)

All. Well! Uncle Scrooge!

Fred. A Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year to the old man. He wouldn't take it from me, but may he have it, nevertheless. Uncle Scrooge!

All. Uncle Scrooge, uncle Scrooge!

(*Scrooge seems to make efforts to reply to the toast, while spirit drags him away.*)

CURTAIN.

STAVE FOUR.

SCENE I.—*Scrooge's chambers.*

Scrooge discovered upon his knees.

Scro. Can this be the Spirit of Christmas Future that I see approaching? shrouded in a black garment, which conceals its head, its form, its face, and leaves nothing visible save one outstretched hand. I am in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come. It points onward with its hand. You are about to show me the shadows of things that have not happened, but will happen in the time before us. Is that so, Spirit? (*Rises and stands trembling.*) Ghost of the Future, I fear you more than any spectre I have seen; but as I know your purpose is to do me good, and as I hope to live to be another man from what I was, I am prepered to bear you company, and do it with a thankful heart. Will you not speak to me? It will not speak. The hand points straight before us. Lead on! Lead on! The night is waning fast, and it is precious time to me, I know. Lead on, Spirit.

(*Scrooge crosses stage, as if following Spirit to tormentor entrance, and remains while the scene changes.*)

SCENE II.—*A Street.*

Scro. Ah, here comes Stevens and there Jones. I have always made it a point to stand well in their esteem—that is in a business point of view.

Enter Mr. Stevens R. *and Mr. Jones* L., *meeting.*

Stevens. How are you?

Jones. Pretty well. So Old Scratch has got his own, at last, hey?

Stev. So I am told. Cold, isn't it?

Jones. Seasonable for Christmas-time. You're not a skater, I suppose?

Stev. No, no. Something else to think of. Good morning. [*Exeunt in opposite directions.*]

Scro. Ah, here are more of my old business friends; the Spirit directs me to hear what they say.

Enter Mr. Futchin, Mr. Snuffer and Mr. Redface..

Mr. F. No; I don't know much about it, either way; I only know he's dead.

Mr. R. When did he die?

Mr. F. Last night, I believe.

Mr. S. Why, what was the matter with him? (*Takes snuff out of a large snuff-box.*) I thought he would never die.

Mr F. I did not take the trouble to inquire.

Mr. R. What has he done with his money?

Mr. F. I haven't heard (*yawning*); left it to his company, perhaps. He hasn't left it to *me*. That all I know. (*All laugh.*) It's likely to be a very cheap funeral, for upon my life I don't know of any body to go to it. Suppose we make up a party and volunteer?

Mr. R. I don't mind going if a lunch is provided. I must be fed if I make one. (*All laugh.*)

Mr. F. Well, I am the most disinterested, after all, for I never wear blackg loves and I never eat lunch. But I'll offer to go, if any body else will. When I come to think of it, I am not at all sure that I wasn't his most particular friend; for we used to stop and speak whenever we met.

Mr. S. I would volunteer, but that I have another little matter to attend to that will prevent me. However, I have no objections to joining you in a drink to his memory.

Mr. R. I am with you. Let us adjourn to the punch bowl. [*Exeunt.*]

Scro. To whom can these allusions refer; Jacob Marley has been dead these seven years, and surely those whom I have considered my best friends would not speak of my death so unfeelingly. I suppose, however, that these conversations have some latent moral for my own improvement, and as I have now resolved upon a change of life, I shall treasure up all I see and hear. Lead on, Shadow, I follow! (*Crosses to the opposite entrance and remains.*)

SCENE III.—*Interior of a junk or pawn-shop.*

Enter Old Joe, ushering in Mrs. Mangle, Mrs. Dilber and Mr. Shroud, door in flat.

Old Joe. You couldn't have met in a better place; come in. You were made free here long ago, you know, and the other two ain't strangers. Stop till I shut the door of the shop. Ah! how it skricks! There isn't such a rusty bit of metal in the place as its own hinges, I believe, and I'm sure there's no such old bones here as mine. Ha, ha! We're all suitable to our calling, we're well matched. Come, come! we are at home here. (*Trims smoky lamp at table.*)

Mrs. M. What odds, then! What odds, Mrs. Dilber? (*Throws her bundle on the floor and sits on a stool, resting her elbows on her knees.*) Every person has a right to take care of themselves. *He* always did.

Mrs. D. That's true, indeed! No man cared for himself more than he did.

Mrs. M. Why, then, don't stand staring as if you was afraid, woman; who's the wiser? We're not going to pick holes in each other's coats, I suppose?

Mr. Shroud. No, indeed! We should hope not.

Mrs. M. Very well, then: that's enough. Who's the worse for the loss of a few things like these? Not a dead man, I suppose.

Mr. S. (*Laughing.*) No, indeed.

Mrs. M. If he wanted to keep 'em after he was dead, the wicked old Screw, why wasn't he natural in his life time? If he had been, he'd have had somebody to look after him when he was struck with death, instead of lying gasping out his last there, alone by himself.

Mrs. D. It's the truest word ever was spoke. It's a judgment on him.

Mrs. M. I wish it was a little heavier judgment, and it should have been, you may depend upon it, if I could have laid my hands on anything else. Open that bundle, Old Joe, and let me know the value of it. Speak out plain. I'm not afraid to be the first, nor afraid to let them see it. We knew pretty well that we were helping ourselves, before we met here, I believe. It's no sin. Open the bundle, Joe.

Mr. S. Oh, no; we don't mind showing what we have.

Here, Joe, value these. (*Mrs. D. and Mr. S. lay their packages on the table and Joe proceeds to examine them.*)

Joe. (*Chalking the figures on the wall as he names them.*) A seal, eight shillings; pencil-case, three and six pence; pair of sleeve-buttons, five and four-pence; scarf-pin, ninepence. Nine and four, thirteen, and six, is nineteen—seven. One and five's six, and thirteen is nine, and eight makes seventeen. That's your account, and I wouldn't give another sixpence if I was to be boiled for it. Who's next?

Mrs. D. I hope you'll be more liberal with me, Mr. Joe. I'm a poor, lone widow, and it's hard for me to make a living.

Joe. I always give too much to the ladies. It's a weakness of mine, and that's the way I ruin myself. Under-clothing, sheets, towels, sugar-tongs; these tea-spoons are old-fashioned, and the boots won't bear mending. One pound six, that's your account. If you asked me another penny, and made it an open question I'd repent of being liberal, and knock off half-a crown.

Mrs. M. Now, undo *my* bundle, Joe.

Joe. (*Opening bundle.*) What do you call this? Bed curtains?

Mrs. M. Ah! (*Laughing.*) Bed curtains.

Joe. You don't mean to say you took 'em down, rings and all, with Old Scrooge lying there?

Mrs. M. Yes I do. Why not?

Joe. You were born to make your fortune, and you'll certainly do it.

Mrs. M. I certainly shan't hold my hand, when I can get anything in it by reaching it out, for the sake of such a man as *he* was, I promise you, Joe. Don't drop that oil upon the blanket, now.

Joe. His blankets?

Mrs. M. Whose else's do you think? He isn't likely to take cold without 'em, I dare say.

Joe. I hope he didn't die of anything catching. Eh? (*Stopping his work and looking up.*)

Mrs. M. Don't you be afraid of that; I ain't so fond of his company that I'd loiter about him for such things if he did. Ah, you may look through that shirt till your eyes ache, but you won't find a hole in it nor a threadbare place. It's the best he had, and a fine one, too. They'd have wasted it if it hadn't been for me.

Joe. What do you call wasting of it?

Mrs. M. (*Laughing.*) Putting it on him to be buried in, to be sure. Somebody was fool enough to do it, but I took it off again. If calico ain't good enough for such a purpose, it isn't good enough for anything. It's as becoming to the body. He can't look uglier than he did in that one.

Joe. Well, well! I'll rain myself again. I'll give you two guineas for the lot, and go to the bankrupt court. (*Takes bag of coin and counts out their amounts.*)

Mrs. M. Ha, ha! This is the end of it, you see. He frightened every one away from him when he was alive, to profit us when he was dead.

All. Ha, ha, ha! [*Exeunt door in flat, old Joe lighting them out.*]

Scro. Spirit! I see, I see. This is my own case, if nothing happens to change it. My life tends this way. Spirit, in leaving this, I shall not leave its lesson; trust me. If there is any person in the city who feels the least emotion for the death here announced, show that person to me. [*Crosses to* L., *while scene closes in.*]

SCENE IV.—*Street. Exterior of Scrooge & Marley's Counting House.*

Scro. Why, here is my place of business, and has been occupied by Scrooge & Marley for many years. I see the house, let me behold what I shall be in the days to come. Why, Spirit, the house is yonder. Why do you point away? (*Goes to the window and looks in.*) It is the old office still; the same furniture; but no one occupies my chair. Ah! some one comes.

Enter James Badger from Counting House, going off right, meets Mrs. Badger at right entrance.

Mrs. B. Ah! James, I have waited for you so long. What news? Is it good or bad?

James. Bad.

Mrs B. We are quite ruined?

James. No. There is hope yet, Caroline.

Mrs. B. If *he* relents, there is. Nothing is past hope, if such a miracle has happened.

James. He is past relenting. He is dead.

Mrs. B. Dead! Thank Heaven; we are saved. (*Pause.*) I pray forgiveness. I am sorry that I gave expression to the emotions of my heart.

James. What the half drunken woman, whom I told you of last night, said to me when I tried to see him and obtain a week's delay, and what I thought was a mere excuse to avoid me, turns out to have been quite true. He was not only very ill, but dying then.

Mrs. B. To whom will our debt be transferred?

James. I don't know, and I have been unable to ascertain. At all events, before that time we shall be ready with the money; and even though we were not, it would be a bad fortune indeed to find so merciless a creditor in his successor. We may sleep to-night with light hearts, Caroline!

Mrs. B. Yes; and our dear children will be brighter when they find the gloom dispelled from the minds of their parents. We cannot deny that this man's death has occasioned some happiness.

James. Come, let us hurry home [*Exeunt*, R.]

Scro. Spirit, it is evident that the only emotion you can show me, caused by the event foreshadowed, is one of pleasure. Let me see some tenderness connected with the death of another, or what has just been shown me will be forever present in my mind.

SCENE V.—*Bob Cratchit's home. Mrs. Cratchit, Belinda, Little Cratchit and Peter Cratchit discovered at table, the two former sewing and the latter reading a book.*

Peter. (*Reading.*) And he took a child and set him in the midst of them.

Scro. Where have I heard those words? I have not dreamed them. Why does he not go on?

Mrs C. (*Betrays emotions; lays her work upon the table, and puts her hand to her face.*) The color hurts my eyes.

Bel. Yes, poor Tiny Tim!

Mrs. C. They're better now. It makes them weak by candle-light; and I wouldn't show weak eyes to your father when he comes home, for the world. It must be near his time. (*Resumes her work.*)

Peter. Past it, rather (*shutting up book*), but I think

he has walked a little slower than he used, these last few evenings, mother.

Mrs. C. (*In a faltering voice.*) I have known him walk with—I have known him walk with Tiny Tim upon his shoulder very fast indeed.

Peter. And so have I, often.

Bel. And so have I.

Mrs. C. But he was very light to carry, and his father loved him so, that it was no trouble; no trouble. And there is your father at the door.

Enter Bob Cratchit. Belinda and Little Cratchit meet him; Peter places a chair for him, and Mrs. C. averts her head to conceal her emotion. Bob kisses Belinda, and takes Little C. on his knees, who lays his little cheek against his face.

Bob. Hard at work, my dears; hard at work. Why, how industrious you are, and what progress you are making. You will be done long before Sunday.

Mrs. C. Sunday! You went to-day, then, Robert?

Bob. Yes, my dear; I wish you could have gone, it would have done you good to see how green a place it is. But you'll see it often. I promised him that I would walk there on a Sunday. My little, little child! my little child! (*Rises and retires up stage to compose himself; returns and resumes his place at the table.*) Oh, I must tell you of the extraordinary kindness of Mr Scrooge's nephew, whom I have scarcely seen but once, and who, meeting me in the street, and seeing that I looked a little—just a little—down, you know, inquired what had happened to distress me. On which, for he is the pleasantest-spoken gentleman you ever heard, I told him. I am heartily sorry for it, Mr. Cratchit, he said, and heartily sorry for your good wife. By-the-bye, how he ever knew *that*, I don't know.

Mrs. C. Knew what, my dear?

Bob. Why, that you were a good wife.

Peter. Everybody knows that!

Bob. Very well observed, my boy. I hope they do. Heartily sorry, he said, for your good wife. If I can be of service to you in any way, he said, giving me his card, that's where I live; pray come to me. Now, it

wasn't for the sake of anything he might be able to do for us, so much as for his kind way, that this was quite delightful. It really seemed as if he had known our Tiny Tim, and felt with us.

Mrs. C. I'm sure he's a good soul.

Bob. You would be sure of it, my dear, if you saw and spoke to him. I shouldn't be at all surprised—mark my words—if he got Peter a better situation.

Mrs. C. Only hear that, Peter.

Bel. And then Peter will be keeping company with some one, and setting up for himself.

Peter. (*Grinning.*) Get along with you!

Bob. It's just as likely as not, one of these days; though there's plenty of time for that, my dear. But, however and whenever we part from one another, I am sure we shall none of us forget poor Tiny Tim, shall we? or this first parting that there was among us?

All. Never, father.

Bob. And I know, I know, my dears, that when we recollect how patient and how mild he was—although he was a little child—we shall not quarrel easily among ourselves, and forget poor Tiny Tim in doing it.

All. No, never, father. (*All rise.*)

Bob. I am very happy. I am very happy! (*Kisses Mrs C., Belinda, Young C. and shakes hands with Peter.*) Spirit of Tiny Tim, thy childish essence is from above.

CURTAIN.

STAVE FIVE.

SCENE I.—*Scrooge's chamber. Scrooge discovered on his knees at the easy chair.*

Scro. Spirit! Hear me! I am not the man I was. I will not be the man I must have been, but for this intercourse. Why have shown me all that you have, if I am past all hope? Good Spirit, your nature intercedes for me, and pities me. Assure me that I yet may change the shadows you have shown me, by an altered life.

Your hand trembles. I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present and the Future. The spirits of all three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach. Oh! tell me I may sponge away the shadows of the future. (*Grasps the easy chair in his agony, as if struggling to detain it.*) Do not go, I entreat you. It shrinks, it has collapsed, it has dwindled down into an easy chair. Yes! my own chair, my own room and best—and happiest of all—my own time before me to make amends in. Oh, Jacob Marley, Heaven and the Christmas time be praised for this! I say it on my knees, old Jacob; on my knees! (*Rises and goes and opens door* R., 2 1 E.) They are not torn down—the bed curtains are not torn down, rings and all. They are there—I am here—the shadows of the things that would have been, may be dispelled. They will be; I know they will! (*Commences to dress himself, putting everything on wrong, etc.*) I don't know what to do! (*Laughing and crying.*) I am as light as a feather; I am as happy as an angel; I am as merry as a school boy; I am as giddy as a drunken man. A Merry Christmas to every body! A Happy New year to all the world! Hallo here! Whoop! Hallo! (*Dancing and capering around the room.*) There's the saucepan that the gruel was in; there's the door by which the Ghost of Jacob Marley entered; there's the corner (*pointing into adjoining room*) where the Ghost of Christmas Past sat. It's all right; it's all true; it all happened. Ha, ha, ha! (*Laughing heartily.*) I don't know what day of the month it is. I don't know how long I've been among the Spirits. I don't know any thing. I'm quite a baby. Never mind; I don't care. I'd rather be a baby. Hallo! whoop! Hallo here! (*Bells or chimes commences to ring. Goes to window and opens it.*) No fog, no mist; clear, bright, jovial, cold; cold, piping for the blood to dance to; golden sunlight, heavenly sky; sweet, fresh air; merry bells. Oh, glorious! glorious! (*Looking out of window.*) Hey! you boy in your Sunday clothes, what's to-day?

Voice outside. Eh?

Scro. What's to day, my fine fellow?

Voice outside. To-day! why, Christmas Day.

Scro. It's Christmas Day; I haven't missed it. The Spirits have done it all in one night. They can do any

thing they like. Of course they can. Of course they can. (*Returns to window.*) Halloo, my fine fellow!

Voice outside. Halloo!

Scro. Do you know the poulterers in the next street but one, at the corner?

Voice outside. I should hope I did.

Scro. An intelligent boy! a remarkable boy! Do you know whether they've sold the prize turkey that was hanging up there? Not the little prize turkey: the big one?

Voice outside. What, the one as big as me?

Scro. What a delightful boy. It's a pleasure to talk to him. Yes, my buck.

Voice outside. It's hanging there now.

Scro. Is it? Go and buy it.

Voice outside. What do you take me for?

Scro. No, no. I am in earnest. Go and buy it, and tell 'em to bring it here, that I may give them the directions where to take it. Come back with the man, and I'll give you a shilling. Come back with him in less than five minutes, and I'll give you half a crown. That boy's off like a shot. I'll send it to Bob Cratchit's. (*Rubbing his hands and chuckling*) He shan't know who sent it. It's twice the size of Tiny Tim. Joe Miller never made such a joke as sending it to Bob's will be. I must write the directions for that turkey. (*Sits at table to write.*)

SCENE II.—*A street. Exterior of Scrooge's Chambers.*

Enter Scrooge from the house.

Scro. (*Addressing the knocker on the door.*) I shall love it as long as I live. (*Patting the knocker.*) I scarcely ever looked at it before. What an honest expression it has in its face. It's a wonderful knocker.—Here's the turkey

Enter boy with large turkey.

Scro. Halloo! Whoop! How are you! Merry Christmas! There's a turkey for you! This bird never could have stood upon his legs, he would have snapped 'em short off in a minute, like sticks of sealing-wax. Here's your half-crown, boy. Now take the monster to Bob

Cratchit, Camden-town; and tell him it's a present from his grandmother, who wishes him A Merry Christmas, and A Happy New Year. Hold, that turkey is too large for you to carry; take a cab, here's the money to pay for it.

Enter Mr. and Mrs. Badger, R.

Scro. Why, here comes James Badger and wife, as sure as I live. Good morning!

James. Good morning, sir! A Merry Christmas to you!

Scro. The same to you both, and many of them.

Mrs. B. He seems in a good humor, speak to him about it.

Scro. Going to church, eh?

James. We were going, sir, to hear the Christmas Carols, but mindful of the obligation resting upon us, which falls due to-morrow, and of our inability to meet the payment, we have called to beg your indulgence, and ask for a further extension of time.

Scro. Why, James, how much do you owe me?

James. Twenty pounds, sir.

Scro. How long since you contracted the debt?

James. Ten years to morrow, sir.

Scro. Then you have already paid me over half the amount in interest, which interest has been compounded, and I have, in fact, received more than the principal. My dear fellow, you owe me nothing, just consider the debt cancelled.

James. Surely, sir, you cannot mean it.

Scro. But I do.

Mrs. B. Oh, sir, how can we ever sufficiently manifest our gratitude for such unexpected generosity?

Scro. By saying nothing about it. Remember, James and wife, this is Christmas day, and on this day, of all others, we should do unto others as we would have them do unto us.

James. May Heaven reward you, sir. You have lightened our hearts of a heavy burden.

Scro. There, there! go to church.

James. We shall, sir, and remember our benefactor in our devotions. (*Shaking hands.*) I can say heartily a Merry Christmas.

Mrs. B. And A Happy New Year. [*Exeunt* L.]

Scro. I guess they are glad, now, that I am alive, and will be really sorry when I die. Halloo! Whoop!

Enter Mr. Barnes, L., *passes across stage; Scrooge follows and stops him.*

Scro. My dear sir (*taking both his hands*), how do you do? I hope you succeeded yesterday. It was very kind of you. A Merry Christmas to you, sir.

Mr. B. Mr. Scrooge?

Scro. Yes. That is my name, and I fear it may not be pleasant to you. Allow me to ask your pardon. And will you have the goodness—(*Scrooge whispers in his ear.*)

Mr. B. Lord bless me—you take my breath away. My dear Mr. Scrooge, are you really serious?

Scro. If you please. Not a farthing less. A great many back payments are included in it, I assure you. Will you do me the favor?

Mr. B. My dear sir (*shaking hands with him*), I don't know what to say to such munifi—

Scro. Don't say any thing, please. Come and see me. Will you come and see me?

Mr. B. I will—with great pleasure. [*Exit,* R.]

Scro. Thank'er, I am much obliged to you. I thank you fifty times. Bless you!

Enter Bob Cratchit, R., *with Tiny Tim on his shoulder.*

Scro. Halloo, Bob Cratchit! What do you mean by coming here?

Bob. I am very sorry, sir; I was not coming, I was only passing, sir, on my way to hear the Christmas carols.

Scro. What right have you to be passing here to remind me that it is Christmas?

Bob. It's only once a year, sir; it shall not be repeated.

Scro. Now, I'll tell you what, my friend, I am not going to stand this any longer; and therefore I give you permission to pass my house fifty times a day, if you want to. I give you a week's vacation, without any deduction for lost time. I am about to raise your salary. (*Giving him a dig in the waistcoat; Bob staggers back, and Scrooge follows him up.*) A Merry Christmas, Bob! (*Slapping him on the back.*) A Merrier Christmas, Bob,

my good fellow, than I have ever given you for many a year! I'll raise your salary, and endeavor to assist your struggling family, and I'll be Tiny Tim's Godfather. Come along, my good fellow, we'll go to church together, and discuss your affairs on the way. Tiny Tim, what do you say to that?

Tiny Tim. I say God bless us, every one.

Bob. I would like to say something, sir, but you have deprived me of the power of speech.

Scro. Come on, then, we'll talk it over as we go. Come, Tiny Tim, and go with your Godfather. (*Takes Tim on his shoulder. Exeunt,* L.)

SCENE III.—*Drawing Room in Fred Merry's house. Fred, Mrs. Fred and Mrs. Kemper discovered seated at table, conversing.*

Fred. Is it possible! You surprise me. I never had the least idea that you had ever met Uncle Scrooge, much less that he was an old admirer of yours.

Mrs. M. Oh! do tell us all about it, dear mother; I'm dying to hear it.

Mrs. K. Well, you must know, my dear children, that Fanny Scrooge— our mother, Fred—was my earliest friend and schoolmate, and through her I became acquainted with her brother—your uncle; at that time a noble spirited boy, fresh from his studies. Our friendship soon ripened into love, and a betrothal. I cannot describe to you how happy and light hearted I was, and how true and devoted your uncle continued. Our marriage was deferred until such time as he should be in a position to provide us a suitable home. After he left Mr. Fezziwig's, where he had served his time, he entered the service of Jacob Marley, and subsequently became his partner. It was at this time I observed a change in him; he was not less ardent than before, but I soon discovered that avarice had become the guiding passion of his nature, and that our love was subservient to its influence. Foreseeing that only misery could ensue from our union, I released him from the engagement. And now after the lapse of many years, with the exception of the day, five years ago, when he attended your father's funeral, we have not met or exchanged a word with each other.

Mrs M. But, mother, did you really love him?

Mrs. K. I did, my dear—previous to the discovery of the change in him.

Mrs. M. And did you not sacrifice your love in releasing him?

Mrs. K. I merely sacrificed my desires to common sense. Love, to be lasting, must be mutual, and if it is not paramount to all other passions, it ends in misery or hate. Hence, being guided by judgment, I soon found by experience that true love can again exist if worthily bestowed.

Fred. Well, dear mother, I agree with your estimate of Uncle Scrooge This is the sixth Christmas Day of our married life, and each Christmas Eve I have invited him to come and dine with us, but he has never yet honored us with his presence, and I suppose he never will.

Scro. (*Gently opening the door and putting in his head*) Fred! may I come in? (*All start and rise, and Fred rushes toward the door with both hands extended.*)

Fred. Why, bless my soul! who's that?

Scro. It's I, your Uncle Scrooge. I have accepted your invitation. Will you let me in?

Fred. Let you in! (*Shaking him heartily by both hands.*) Dear heart alive! Why not? Welcome! welcome! My wife, your niece—Yes, you may. (*Scrooge kisses her.*) Our mother.

Scro. Belle! Heavens! What shall I do? (*Aside.*)

Mrs. K. I fear that our meeting will be painful. I beg your permission, my son, to retire.

Fred. No, no, no. This is Christmas Day. Every body can be happy on this day, that desires to be, and I know that your meeting can be made a pleasant and agreeable one if you both so will it. "Peace on earth and good will to man," is the day's golden maxim

Scro. Although somewhat embarrassed, I concur most heartily in the wise and good-natured counsel of my dear nephew. Never before have I experienced the joys common to this day, and never hereafter, while I am permitted to live, shall I miss them. In the past twenty-four hours I have undergone a complete revolution of ideas and desires, and have awakened unto a new life. Instead of a sordid, avaricious old man, I trust you will find a cheerful, liberal Christian, ever ready to extend to his fellow creatures a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year.

Fred. Why! uncle, I wonder *you* don't go into Parlia-

ment. I could dance for joy. (*Embracing him.*) You dear old man! You shall ever find a hearty welcome here.

Mrs. M. I join with my husband in his earnest congratulations.

Mrs. K. I confess, Mr. Scrooge, that I am rejoiced to find your nephew's assertions so quickly verified, and that an opportunity is offered to renew an acquaintance which I hope will end in uninterrupted friendship. (*They shake hands.*)

Fred. Ah, here comes Topper and the girls.

Enter Topper and Julia Kemper, Snapper and Sarah Kemper.

Fred. Come, girls, hug and kiss your Uncle Scrooge, he has come to make merry with us. (*Takes the girls to Scrooge, and endeavors to make them hug, doing most of the hugging himself.*) Hug him hard! This is Topper, and this is Snapper, they are both sweet on the girls, (*All laugh.*)

Julia and Sarah. Oh, you bad man.

Fred. Come, let us lose no time. What do you say to a game? Shall it be blind man's buff?

All. Agreed.

Fred. Come, Uncle Scrooge, the oldest, first.

Scro. Do with me as you please; it is Christmas Day.

(*They play a lively game, falling over chairs, etc. Scrooge catches each lady, and guesses wrong, until he gets Mrs. Merry, who, in turn, catches Topper, who pulls the bandage down and goes for Julia, and pretends that he tells who she is by the way the hair is fixed, etc. Scrooge and Mrs. Kemper retire up stage, and converse.*)

Julia. Ah, that's not fair, you peeped. I won't play any more. (*Goes up stage with Topper.*)

Fred Well, I could have guessed that catch, and it's nothing more than fair that he should peep before making it. It seems, my dear, that our company have divided into couples. Ought we not demand an explanation?

Mrs. M. As master of the house, it is your duty.

Fred. Mr. Thomas Topper and others, we have long suspected you of some horrible design against the peace

and happiness of this family. What say you to the charge?

Julia. On behalf of our clients, we plead guilty.

Sarah. And urge extenuating circumstances.

Fred. Then nothing more remains, but for the Court to pronounce sentence, which is, that you be placed under the bonds of matrimony, at such time and place as may suit your convenience. But, Madam Belle Kemper and Ebenezer Scrooge, what have you to say in your defense.

Mrs. K. Only this, that Christmas works wonders.

Scro. In other words, Mrs. Kemper finds that Christmas has restored me to a primitive condition, and leaves it to time to test the merits of the happy change. (*To audience.*) We all have cause to bless Christmas, and it shall always be my delight to wish you A Merry Christmas, and A Happy New Year, with Tiny Tim's addition of "God bless us every one."

CURTAIN.

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